# THE HOME CIRCLE

### She Was a Phantom of Delight.*

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman, too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin's-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.

And now I see with eyes serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveler between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warm, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light.

—By William Woodsworth.

### Business and Temperance.

Last week the Wabash joined the other railways, making the use of liquor in excess sufficient ground for an employee's discharge, and yesterday the report came from Pottsville that, "in order to reduce the danger of accidents in the anthracite mines to a minimum and to assure steadier work by the men," the officials of District No. 9 will hereafter discharge all miners who become incompetent by reason of drink.

Because of the greater laxity of the miner's life this action in the mines is all the greater an innovation than that taken by the railroad, and the interesting thing about it is that it was suggested by the employees themselves. They recognized the risk to their own lives involved in the carelessness of a fellow-workman befuddled by intoxicants, and their course was dictated by self-protection.

The drunkard long since lost his usefulness to society. It appears to be becoming a hard world also for the habitual drinker whose pride it has been that he never got "full." In these measures the best of temperance methods are seen. When it no longer "pays" to drink, drinking will go into disuse to an extent not possible by moral suasion.—From the New York Evening World.

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Pygmies are pygmies still, though perched on Alps.—Edward Young.

*This is No 146 of our series of the World's Best Poems, selected especially for The Progre sive Farmer by the Editor. In this series select'ons from the following authors have alre dy appeared: Burns, Bryant, Mr. and Mrs. Browning, Byron, Goldsmith, Holmes Kipling, Lanier, Longfellow, Lowell, Markham, Macaulay, Milton, Moore, Poe, Pope Tennyson. Fimrod, Riley, Ryan, Scott, Shakespeare, Shelley, and others.

### To a Young Student.

Take your studies as they come, but make them count for something before they go. They will be of two kinds—those that you like, and those that you dislike. Use the former to develop your natural gifts, and the latter to correct your natural defects. There is a great difference in minds. Some are first-class, some are second-class, and so on. You can never tell what kind of mind you have unless you test it thoroughly by hard work. Even if it should appear to be second-class, do not be discouraged. A second-class mind well cultivated will yield a great deal more than a first-class mind left fallow. All that you have to do is to make your own garden (not some other man's) give the best crop of which it is capable. Examinations and grades and class room marks are "government crop estimates." As a rule, they are fairly accurate. But, after all, it is not the estimate, but the crop iself that comes to market and feeds the world. You know what you have learned. And you have learned just as much as you know.

Make your friends with a purpose of enlarging your life, your tastes, your sympathies, your hopes. Follow your inclinations in forming acquaintances, but keep your eyes open, and see where they are leading you. Unless you enjoy a friendship it is not likely to be of much good to you. But, on the other hand, unless it really does you good, your joy in it will soon grow barren, or turn to pain. Have some friends to whom you look up, and some who look up to you. Be a grateful receiver as well as a generous giver. Let the secrets you share with your friends be such as will make you not ashamed, but glad to look deeper into each other's eyes.

Play the out-of-door games that suit you and give you honest pleasure. They will suffice to give you all the physical training that you need. The object of athletic sports among amateurs is twofold: first, to relax and amuse the mind; secondly, to keep the body in good condition for the real work of life—which is not athletic sports. There is no advantage in cultivating more muscle than you are likely to have any use for, unless you are going to be a professional athlete. On the contrary, it is a burden and a danger. What you want is a body that will be a ready, cheerful, and capable servant to your mind.

Do not starve or neglect the spiritual side of your nature. The best and wisest men of the world have all agreed that a full and noble life is not possible for a man without religion. It would be a poor outcome for you and for the world if your education should end in that half-knowledge which, as Lord Bacon says, tends to atheism. But even atheism, it seems to me, is better than the dead-and-dry religion which exists without praise, without good works, without personal prayer. Give your best thought, your deepest feeling, to the subject that means most—the true and immortal life that is brought to light in Jesus Christ.

A hundred questions—and some of them very perplexing are sure to meet you as you go on with your education. Do not try to anticipate them. Do not trv to answer them now. Let yourself go, with a good heart and a cheerful courage, into the course that opens before you. Take your privilege with its obligations. Let the world pay for your living now. But make sure that your education fits you to pay the world back for all you have received, in a life equipped and disciplined for fine service among men.—Henry Van Dyke, in the Interior.

### Now Is the Time to Improve Country School Grounds.

A great deal has been said and written of late in regard to the teaching of nature and the elements of agriculture in the rural schools, and we are glad to notice the tendency in this direction. But the teaching will be far more effective if the children have object lessons around the school house. The bare and cheerless grounds around most of the country school houses give the pupils little idea of what natural beauty should be, and are generally examples of how ugly and uninviting the premises can be made. Now that the time for the planting of hardy trees and shrubbery is coming near at hand it is time to make some plans for the beautifying of the grounds around the school house. Nature studies will be far more attractive to the pupils if they have a part in the practical application of some of the things they may be taught. Get the children interested in the making of the premises attractive. Prepare a well considered plan for the grounds, and while it may not be possible to carry it all out at once, keep working by degrees on the plan until it is complete. Arrange for a good breadth of grass plat framed in with shrubbery and trees. Plant quick-growing shrubbery and vines to screen the outbuildings. As a help in the work send to the Secretary of Agriculture in Washington and ask for a copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 134, on "Tree Planting on Rural School Grounds." This will give you some good ideas of what to do and what not to do. A teacher who is really a lover of nature can easily get the children enthused with the work, and cause them to take pride in the improvement of the surroundings of their school house. The bulletin named gives plain instructions about raising the trees needed in a little nurserv. and the growing of the trees can be made a very useful study. Then most of the hardy shrubbery can be grown from cuttings that can be had in almost any neighborhood. If these cuttings are made in the fall after the leaves are off, and buried in bundles out of reach of frost, they can be set in the spring in rows for the production of the plants. At any rate, whether it is possible to buy the trees or not, the teacher who is in earnest in the work can soon raise the needed material and teach the pupils a useful lesson at the same time.—Practical Farmer.

### A Compliment Uncomplimentary.

Although Secretary Shaw is a man of diplomacy he enjoys loosing an occasional shaft of satire. An official who takes great pride in his dress, but who, in spite of elaborate toilets, is not conspicuous for his beauty, recently attempted to grow whiskers. Evidently his effort stirred up domestic objection, for a few days ago, after three months of assiduous cultivation of a black but somewhat reluctant growth of beard, he appeared clean shaven again, explaining to his colleagues that it was his wife's birthday and that in her honor he had removed what she had bewailed as an unnecessary disfiguration.

Forthwith he showed himself to Secretary Shaw, craving commendation.

"Yes, I congratulate you," said the Secretary. "Your case reminds me of the good wife who, venturing on a change in wearing her hair, timidly asked her husband if he thought it unbecoming.

"'Bless you, no!' he exclaimed, trying his best to be complimentary; 'any change would be an improvement in you.'"—Exchange.

### Why Miles Was Dismissed Without Comment.

An interesting story in regard to General Miles comes from the recent Encampment of the Grand Army, at San Franscisco. The General while being entertained at a club was rallied good-humoredly by an old-time comrade for his failure to win a laudatory send-off in his retirement papers.

"In reply to that," remarked General Miles, "let me tell a story. The application may seem a trifle egotistical, but as2 the story is a good one, I'll venture it.

"In the early days of the West an itinerant preacher stopping for refreshment one day at the pioneer home of one of his parishioners was served, among other things, with apple pie. It was not a good pie. The crust was heavy sour, but the encomiums which that clergyman heaped upon it were great. The good wife knew that she had had bad luck with the baking, and as she was, in reality, an excellent cook, she determined that the next time that preacher came her way he would have a pie that was faultless.

"He told her when he was to return, and on that day she set before him an apple pie that was the real thing. He ate it, but to her astonishment vouchsafed not a word of commendation. This was more than the housewife would stand.

"'Brother,' she exclaimed, 'when you were here last you ate an apple pie that wasn't more than half baked, and yet you praised it to the skies. Now you have a pie that nobody needs to be ashamed of, but you haven't a word to say in its favor. I can't understand it.'

"'My good sister,' replied the preacher, 'that pie you served me a few days ago was sadly in need of praise, and I did my full duty in that direction, but this fine pie, bless your heart, does not require any eulogy.'"—Saturday Evening Post.